

## **Activity 8.2: Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Develop Coaching, Mentoring, and TA CEU Course 2016 Final Report**

**Contract Number  
27713**

*Submitted to the:*  
North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education

*On behalf of:*  
Child Care Resources Inc. (CCRI)

Child Care Resources Inc.  
4600 Park Road, Suite 400  
Charlotte, NC 28209  
Phone: (704) 376-6697  
Fax: (704) 376-7865  
[www.childcareresourcesinc.org](http://www.childcareresourcesinc.org)

Child Care Services Association  
P.O. Box 901  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
Phone: (919) 967-3272  
Fax: (919) 967-7683  
[www.childcareservices.org](http://www.childcareservices.org)

Southwestern Child Development  
Commission  
P.O. Box 250  
Webster, NC 28788  
Phone: (828) 586-5561  
Fax: (828) 586-4039  
[www.swcdcinc.org](http://www.swcdcinc.org)

## Introduction

Nationally, North Carolina has been a leader in the early care and education field and it is with much appreciation that Child Care Resources Inc. works with the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education to advance this system. This report will provide a summary of the accomplishments of the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Grant (RttT-ELC): Activity 8.2 – Developing a 2.0 CEU Course on Early Care and Education Coaching, Mentoring, and Technical Assistance. A summary of the accomplishments of this initiative throughout the project, including subjective information about lessons learned, challenges, successes and any implications across for future policy decisions is included in this report.

### **Activity 8.2: Developing a 2.0 CEU Course on Early Care and Education Coaching, Mentoring, and Technical Assistance**

Child Care Resources Inc. (CCRI) received funding for Race to the Top - Early Learning Activity 8.2 to develop a 2.0 (20 hour) CEU on the Art and Science of Early Childhood Technical Assistance (TA) that will serve as a primer for those engaged in technical assistance work within child care resource and referral agencies and across the early childhood system in North Carolina.

As defined by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), technical assistance is “the provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients.... Mentoring, coaching and consultation... are strategies that may be discrete processes or used as a part of education and/or training programs.” For the purposes of this Activity, CCRI interpreted these strategies as they are defined in NACCRRA’s/NAEYC’s joint publication: *Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary* published in 2011:

*Consultation* is a collaborative, problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue specific concern – a program-/organizational-, staff-, or child-/family related issue – or addresses a specific topic.

*Coaching* is a relationship-base process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills and behaviors and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or group.

*Mentoring* is a relationship-based process between colleagues in similar professional roles, with a more experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skills, the mentor; providing guidance and example to the less experienced protégé or mentee. Mentoring is intended to increase an individual’s personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness.

Across NC’s ECE system (inclusive of licensed child care programs, Head Start, NC Pre-K and local public and private pre-kindergarten programs), the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), the NC Partnership for Children, Head Start at federal, local and state levels, the Department of Public Instruction’s Office of Early Learning, the Early Intervention branch of the NC Division of Public Health, and the early childhood departments of NC’s institutions of higher education have invested considerable resources to support the continuous quality improvement of services

delivered to young children and their families and to ensure that ECE programs and practitioners have access to TA services that help them achieve improved and sustained quality.

Yet, NC's ECE technical assistance workforce is quite diverse, with differing levels of education and experience, and is both self-employed and employed by local and regional child care resource and referral agencies, local Smart Start organizations, Head Start, NC Pre-K, the NC-Rated License Assessment Project at UNC-Greensboro, public schools and health departments. These individuals, working both independently of each other and, often times, collaboratively within the same programs, deliver a wide array of TA and/or program assessment services ranging from episodic and short term, to intensive work that lasts for a period of months and/or years to achieve and/or measure specific and varied indicators of child well-being, and/or teacher, classroom, program, and system quality. It should be noted that the most prevalent type of ECE TA strategies resourced in NC is consultation and coaching.

This project endeavored to create a coordinated statewide mechanism of assuring that those who engage in delivering ECE TA services have access to a common base of knowledge that well-prepares them for effectiveness. To that end, the course has been embedded as part of the requirement for the Technical Assistance Provider Endorsement to North Carolina Early Educator Certification. Rather than continue a pattern of episodic access to professional development for the technical assistance workforce, this initiative created an embedded, cross-ECE sector core technical assistance curriculum that is contextualized for North Carolina and targeted to TA consultants who have at least attained a Bachelor's Degree.

This project was led by Janet Singerman, President of Child Care Resources Inc., in collaboration with a contracted team from UNC- Wilmington Watson College of Education comprised of Dr. Susan Catapano (Chair, Department of Educational Leadership), Dr. Amelia K. Moody (Assistant Professor, Early Childhood and Special Education Department) and Dr. Scott R. Imig (Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Leadership) to develop the CEU, pilot its delivery, and ultimately deliver two, two-day Train the Trainers sessions for NC's CCR&R TA workforce and other NC early care and education TA practitioners. As an addendum to the original contract, in 2015 NC DCDEE approved continued work within this project to create a 3-semester credit hour graduate level course, developed in alignment with, and expanding on the original CEU content.

An advisory committee was comprised to inform the content and design of the CEU and the group met once for this purpose in 2013. Facilitated by Janet Singerman and Dr. Susan Catapano (with other team members present), invited participants included: Monnie Griggs (Child Care Services Association); Kate Thegan (private consultant); Nicole McCaskle, Allison Hall and Marilyn Thompson (NC Rated License Assessment Project); Jackie Quirk (NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center); Brittany C. Falls (Guilford Child Development Center); Mandy Mills and Vickie Ansley (Southwestern Child Development Commission) Jennifer Curtis (Regional Head Start Technical Assistance Coordinator, ICFI); Rachel Ward (Craven Smart Start); Sharon Sullivan (Statewide TA/PD Specialist for NC CCR&R Council); Lanier DeGrella (Infant Toddler Quality Initiative/CCSA); Amanda Hazen (Child Care Networks); Denise Brewer (Appalachian State University); Kate Irish (NC Smart Start); Edna Collins (NCDCEE); Smokie Brawley (Healthy Social Behaviors Initiative, CCRI); Lorie Barnes (NC AEYC); Cindy Broadway (CCRI); Brenda Dennis (FPG- retired); Vivian James (Department of Public Instruction); Sarah Buckner (NCDCEE); Cindy Wheeler (NCDCEE/NC Pre-K ); Amanda Hall (NCDCEE – NC Pre-K); Amanda Smith (Johnston Community College); Ann Marie Dekort-Young and Amy Jo Johnson (NC Pre-K) and Lori Jones (School-Age Project Manager/CCSA).

Please see chart on the next page for achievement of specific performance measures.

### RttT ELC Final Progress Report for Develop Coaching, Mentoring and TA CEU Course

Outcomes and Outputs	Year 1 (2012)	Year 2 (2013)	Year 3 (2014)	Year 4 (2015)	Final Results
Selection of a contractor to develop ECE TA CEU	<b>Met</b> Dr. Susan Catapano and a team from UNC-W were selected to serve as the contractor for this project. A contract for service was executed in December, 2012.				<b>Met</b> Dr. Susan Catapano and a team from UNC-W were selected to serve as the contractor for this project. A contract for service was executed in December, 2012.
Individuals are identified within NC DCDEE to serve as a liaison to this project, to provide input, and obtain necessary approvals of project milestones.	<b>Met</b> Mary Lee Porterfield of NC DCDEE both provided support for this project.				
A volunteer advisory group of representatives of the cross-sector ECE workforce is convened to provide initial input to the content of the ECE TA CEU.	<b>Not Met</b> A voluntary advisory group was not convened in 2012.	<b>Met</b> A volunteer advisory group was convened in February, 2013 in Durham, NC.			<b>Met</b> A volunteer advisory group was convened in February, 2013 in Durham, NC.
Development of a 2.0 CEU Course on the Art and Science of Early Childhood Technical Assistance to be field tested.		<b>Met</b> Course curriculum was created and approved by NC DCDEE.			<b>Met</b> Course curriculum was created and approved by NC DCDEE.

# Develop Coaching, Mentoring, and TA CEU Course | 2016

Outcomes and Outputs	Year 1 (2012)	Year 2 (2013)	Year 3 (2014)	Year 4 (2015)	Final Results
Field test of The Art and Science of Early Childhood Technical Assistance CEU course		<b>Met</b> A field test of the 2.0 CEU was convened December 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2013.			<b>Met</b> A field test of the 2.0 CEU was convened December 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2013.
Completion of identified revisions needed based on field testing and final development of TA CEU and Trainer's Guide.		<b>Partially met</b> Due to the federal government shutdown, the course pilot was postponed at the direction of DCDEE and could not be convened until mid-December 2013. Revisions based on pilot will not be completed until early 2014.	<b>Met</b> Revisions based on the pilot were completed in February, 2014.		<b>Met</b> Revisions based on the pilot were completed in February, 2014.
Publish TA CEU and Trainer's Guide in final form.			<b>Met</b> The final version of the Trainer's guide was completed in February, 2014.		<b>Met</b> The final version of the Trainer's guide was completed in February, 2014.
Trainers from regional lead CCR&R agencies will be trained to deliver the ECE 2.0 TA CEU.			<b>Met</b> Two train the trainer sessions were held in 2014, one on March 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> in Charlotte, NC and one on March 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> in Greenville, NC. 38 individuals were trained as trainers during these two events.		<b>Met</b> Two train the trainer sessions were held in 2014, one on March 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> in Charlotte, NC and one on March 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> in Greenville, NC. 38 individuals were trained as trainers during these two events.

## Develop Coaching, Mentoring, and TA CEU Course | 2016

Outcomes and Outputs	Year 1 (2012)	Year 2 (2013)	Year 3 (2014)	Year 4 (2015)	Final Results
CCRI will subcontract with Dr. Susan Catapano to co-develop an online asynchronous, three semester credit hour graduate-level course on The Art and Science of Early Childhood Technical Assistance.				<b>Met</b> CCRI contracted with Dr. Catapano for the creation of the 3 semester graduate-level course in January, 2015.	<b>Met</b> CCRI contracted with Dr. Catapano for the creation of the 3 semester graduate-level course in January, 2015.
Course design and content will be completed and submitted to NC DCDEE for review and approval				<b>Met</b> The syllabus for the course was submitted to NC DCDEE in May, 2015 and was approved.  Final online course content was submitted via online access to Blackboard on 12/30/2015.	<b>Met</b> The syllabus for the course was submitted to NC DCDEE in May, 2015 and was approved.  Final online course content was submitted via online access to Blackboard on 12/30/2015.
Completion of an Instructor's Guide to approved three-semester credit hour course will be developed.				<b>Met</b> Access to the completed course on Blackboard was submitted to NC DCDEE on 12/29/2015	<b>Met</b> Access to the completed course on Blackboard was submitted to NC DCDEE on 12/29/2015
Three semester credit hour graduate-level course will be available for student enrollment in the 2015 Fall Semester.				<b>Partially Met</b> With permission of NC DCDEE, the 3 semester credit-hour course was not available for Fall 2015. Instead, it was added to the course calendar at UNCW for Winter term (December, 2015 - January 2016).	<b>Met</b> The 3 semester credit-hour course was added to the course calendar and held at UNCW for winter term (December, 2015 - January 2016).

**Challenges:**

Over the course of the project, one challenge was experienced. This challenge is highlighted below with a brief discussion of the issue and how it was handled by project staff.

**Content and Timing.** During the creation of the 2.0 CEU, and subsequently the 3 semester credit hour course, it was apparent that the amount of valuable and pertinent content was far greater than could be covered adequately in the time frames provided. Therefore, the course developer spent considerable time determining what content would be best suited for each learning event, and how to best incorporate it. The two final courses are the result of this work.

**Lessons Learned:**

Over the course of this project, three important lessons about the importance of this work, and about NC's ECE TA field were learned. This section of the report highlights some of these lessons that inform the recommendations provided in the next section. First, through anecdotal reports from trainers providing the 2.0 CEU, it is apparent that there are significant differences in the approaches to TA being used throughout the state both within and between sectors. These differences in approaches highlight the necessity for the presentation of a common approach to TA for use by all sectors providing TA in the ECE settings.

Second, trainers shared that while there were significant differences in approaches to technical assistance, those providing technical assistance in the ECE field were eager to work alongside others who provided similar services and enjoyed the opportunity to learn from each other. In many situations, participants in training knew each other professionally, but did not necessarily have a significant understanding of the different roles that they each played in regard to ECE programs. Trainers have shared that the length of the training provides for rich discussion between participants from different sectors and programs and allows for a unique networking and collaboration opportunity for TA providers that they do not often get to experience. Trainers report that their participants were eager to continue to engage in similar ways with other who do similar work.

Third, some participants shared frustration in their ability to implement some of the techniques, strategies, and the cognitive coaching model presented in the CEU due to limitations and/or restrictions from their funder. In particular, participants shared that when funding is restricted to achieving certain program level outcomes (such as increased star ratings) in a short period of time, it is hard to apply a cognitive coaching model to practice. While trainers provided guidance about how participants may adjust the strategies and model to meet the needs of their situation, much of North Carolina's early childhood technical assistance funding supports TA consultation toward overall program level outcomes, rather than coaching which focusses more on the individual teacher's or administrator's development.

Many trainers and participants noted the difference between what they are expected to achieve within the scope of their work (typically consultation based, due to time and funder expectations regarding programmatic change) and what they feel they could achieve with individual teachers and administrators if they were funded to provide more individualized coaching.

**Closing Summary & Recommendations:**

Throughout the course of this project, 38 individuals were trained as trainers on the 2.0 CEU curriculum (36 CCR&R staff, 2 EESLPD mentor/evaluators, 1 Head Start representative). These trainers unanimously reported being satisfied with the training they received, being prepared to train on the topic, feeling like the information would help them in their jobs, and feeling as though they had an increased understanding of the topic.

Distribution of the 36 CCR&R staff trained is provided in the table below:

Region	Number of TA CEU Trainers
1	2
2	2
3	5
4	2
5	2
6	3
7	3
8	3
9	3
10	2
11	2
12	3
13	3
14	2

Further, these 38 trainers had great success in implementing the 2.0 CEU across the state with TA partners in their regions. In CY14 and CY15 combined, through Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant project 8.3 (CCR&R Enhancement), trainers within the CCR&R system trained 341 TA practitioners (269 of whom were CCR&R staff).

Interest is still strong in participating in this CEU, however the need for training is not consolidated in one area of the state. Therefore, ongoing efforts to provide training will be offered by the Statewide TA/PD Specialist, in an attempt to provide training in locations that will be accessible to individuals from all regions. The first of these trainings was held in January, 2016 for 26 individuals from across the state. In addition, trainers across the state may also continue to provide the training within their agency, county, and/or region.

To further engage the ECE TA provider field in this topic, to continue to embed this opportunity into practice, and to support TA providers in implementing the strategies and model presented in the CEU, the following recommendations are provided:

- Continue support for the provision of the TA CEU across the state to ensure availability to ECE TA providers from all sectors.
- Support opportunities for collaboration and engagement among TA providers from different programs and sectors.
- Work with funders to expand support for coaching focusing on individual practitioner outcomes (which may require more intervention time but will likely produce more sustainable improvements to practice) in addition continuing support for TA consultation at the program level.